

Occupy until He Comes – Doing a Work

 sightedmoon.com/saving-your-butt-or-doing-a-work-noah-in-the-2nd-month/

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2nd day of the 2nd month?5849 years after the creation of Adam

14th Day of 2nd week of Counting the Omer

The 2nd Month in the Fourth year of the third Sabbatical Cycle

The Third Sabbatical Cycle of the 119th Jubilee Cycle

The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes Famines, and Pestilences

April 13, 2013

Shabbat Shalom Family,

This past week I was sent an article that Bill Cloud sent out. I have not had any issues with Mr. Cloud that I am aware of. But this article struck me. He has said those things I have been saying but in a gentler way. And he also has seen the damage done by those teaching The Daniel Timeline lie. Even though it is now impossible for this teaching to work just from the numbers it supports, there are still some who are clinging to it. So this week I tip my hat to Bill Cloud for this and share it with you.

Where is Your Focus?

Shalom to all. In my last communication, as you may recall, my topic addressed being a servant as opposed to being a survivor. I asked the question, "Which are you?" As I tried to make clear, I was and continue to be concerned about the way some are choosing to respond to all the troubling news facing us in these last days. It seemed to me that, for awhile, there were almost daily prognostications about the future that, intentionally or unintentionally, provoked some hasty conclusions about if we need to flee, where we need run or move to, etc. All this chatter and some of the reactions to it, in my opinion, had the potential to tamper with our focus and undermine our mission as a light to the nations. For instance, I received a letter asking me where I was going to flee to on March 23rd. When I inquired as to why I should be prepared to flee on that day, the answer was, "Because that is when the abomination of desolation is to occur!" As it turned out, that didn't happen. This kind of reaction to what was merely a possibility (and there were many more like it) troubled me and this is why I wrote the article.

Many of you responded to the article with very encouraging and supportive messages, some even thankful for the article because it helped them to, according to their own words, refocus on the right things. On the other hand, there were a few who took exception to the article, feeling that I was implying they lacked faith if they took measures to prepare for hard times. They thought that, perhaps, I had caused confusion because Scripture is replete with warnings to prepare for things that are coming upon the world and it seemed I was saying that we needn't do that. So, for the sake of those who misunderstood my point, I wanted to try and clarify a few things.

First, we all sense something is building and all the signs seem to say, it's not good, which means we all need to be on high alert. Yet, I'm struggling with the notion that the possibilities and the "what ifs" are the things we should be consumed with and focused upon. George Custer got himself and 200 other men killed because he was focused on what he thought was going to happen (a great victory and the glory that goes with it) rather than focusing on what was materializing right in front of him – namely, five thousand or more highly agitated Sioux and Cheyenne warriors charging at him. My point is his lack of focus on the right thing prompted him to act hastily – even foolishly – and he ended up doing the wrong thing at great cost to him and others. We must not make that kind of mistake in these last days – many in darkness are depending upon me and you being true to our mission.

So what are we to focus on? Well, I don't think it should be on all the evil surrounding us. Yes, I believe that we are to be aware of what is going on and, yes, I believe God foretold us of these things that we might be prepared. However, the preparation should be with His purposes in mind, not ours necessarily. In other words, I don't believe He told us of these things in advance that we might be transfixed on what the Adversary is doing through governments, industries and individuals. Rather, I believe He revealed to us what the Adversary would do so that when we see these things come to pass, we would be provoked to set our gaze upon Him and follow His agenda; in short, the darkness is used to provoke us to look to the Light and be the light.

Consider that Peter was able to defy the laws of nature as long as he kept his eyes on Y'shua but as soon as he got his eyes on the storm swirling around him, he began to sink. He knew the waves were there when he got out of the boat but it didn't matter when his focus was upon the Master. This is the point I was trying to make in the last article; we need to stay focused on the Messiah and His agenda in spite of these troubling circumstances we now face. Some would say, "Isn't His agenda to call us out of the nations and gather us all to Him?" Yes, but He hasn't returned yet and, in the meantime, He said, "Occupy (do business) until I come." He did not say, "Occupy until things get uncomfortable" or "until you think my return is close." With all due respect, it seems to me that the latter misinterpretation is what some – I stress some – seem to be applying to the current situation with their words and actions.

Consider that in just the last couple of months, there has been quite a stir about the possibility of altars being built, flights into the wilderness, the abomination of desolation taking place and other types of end-time scenarios. As it turned out, none of these possibilities materialized, yet, we spent an incredible amount of time arguing, debating and, sometimes, planning for the certainty of these things. I am not suggesting that these things won't happen in the future and I'm not suggesting that it is wrong to discuss these things. I'm not attacking those who raised the possibility of certain events taking place and what you might have to do if they did. To their credit, one group at the center of some of this chatter conceded that their observations and "what ifs" turned out to be nothing – at least for now.

On the other hand, I am raising the alarm about our tendency, as a people, to overreact to some of these things and, in the process, forget who we are and why we are. I am bothered by what discussing these things – in some cases predicting these things – prompted many people to do or not do. By that I mean, through all this discussion about the beginning of the Tribulation and our flight into the wilderness were we being a light to a dark and frightened world? Or were we too concerned about being right in our predictions and the dire ramifications for the rest of the world that we began to focus more on self? We can be confident that all that has been written – the good and the bad – will come to pass and all in fulfillment of the Father's will and in His time. In the interim, He still expects us to be salt and light.

When God raised up Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, He called him "my servant." Yet, it was this "servant" who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple and carried the Jewish captives into Babylon; this included Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. For them, there was no place to hide but even in captivity, in the darkest of circumstances, these men served the Creator by being light. In fact, I recommend to you that, had they not been in captivity, the king of Babylon may never have acknowledged the God of Israel as the "most High God" (Dan. 3:26). I'm certainly not suggesting that God intends for all of us to go into captivity but I am arguing that all things – good and bad – serve His purposes. So then, at the end of days, when the Beast of Revelation rises to power and subjugates the earth, even that will be in accordance with the Father's will.

"And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the harlot. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire, for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled." – Revelation 17:16-17

Notice, the ten kings destroying the harlot and giving their power to the Beast is because God put it in their hearts to do it. So, consider the potential irony: as all these end-time events are coming to pass, the Beast and his minions will be, ultimately and unwittingly, acting in accordance with God's will. On the other hand, should our focus be placed on the Beast and what the Adversary is doing and not the Messiah and His agenda, His own people would fail to

act in accordance with His will. Remember, His agenda is not that we should seek to survive but that we would overcome the world. Our mission is to be light and our instructions are to “Occupy (do my business) until I come.”

Fleeing Into the Wilderness

One of the issues raised in response to my last article was, “What about those instances when God tells people to flee or to prepare for an impending disaster, like Lot and Noah?” In fact, didn’t Y’shua hint at this when He said the days of His coming would be likened to the days of Noah and Lot (Lk. 17:26-30)? Yes, it is true that men have been warned, at times, to flee or prepare for coming destruction but consider a few things about these examples. First, what was Lot doing in Sodom in the first place? What had led him there? I argue that carnal inclinations – preferring the land that looked more fertile – are what took him to Sodom. How did he act when he got there? Well, it is obvious that his family did not fare well spiritually and it could be argued that preferring to live in the fertile plain cost Lot most of his family. I would further suggest that Lot may have been spared from destruction, not because of his own righteousness but, because of Abraham’s righteousness. So then, why was it necessary to compel Lot to flee Sodom? Is it possible the angels had to do that because he shouldn’t have been there in the first place?

Where Noah is concerned, yes, he built an ark at the command of the LORD. Yet, Scripture is just as clear that, while he was preparing he was also preaching righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). It seems to me that, in order to be a preacher of righteousness he had to be able to engage people – unrighteous people at that. How effective a preacher was he? Not very effective at all if you are looking for immediate results, but as I pointed out last time, his effectiveness should be viewed long-term. His obedience to God’s purpose was responsible for the preservation of lives of people he would never meet – people like you and me. My point is he built an ark because God commanded him to, not because he was frightened of what was going on around him and that would include the nefillim of his day.

Okay, but what about all those prophecies concerning the wilderness and fleeing into the wilderness? There is no doubt about it: Scripture teaches that, one day, His people will go into the wilderness just like the generation that left Egypt went into the wilderness. Here are just a few verses that speak of this truth.

“I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.” – Ezekiel 20:34-35

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And

there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.” – Hosea 2:14-15

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.” – Revelation 12:6

As I said, these are just a few verses that speak to this issue but, in these few instances, there is something I want you to take note of. God said “I will bring you” and “I will allure her.” If the flight into the wilderness is to follow the pattern of the first Exodus, then I submit to the reader that, when He brought them out the first time, they did not have to guess whether the timing was right. In other words there was no ambiguity about when they were to leave Egypt – they knew it was time because He was bringing them out with great and unmistakable signs and wonders. I suggest that, in the future, when He brings His people out of the nations and allures His people into the wilderness, no one will have to question if it is really the time because when it happens, as it is written, “You shall know that I am the LORD.”

Also, I’d like to point out that the woman flees to a place that is “prepared by God” – in other words, not by man. To be fair, there are many ways we could look at this because God does work through people. Still, the main point is all that is determined to happen will be in accordance with His will and in His time – not man’s timing or planning. “There is a way that seems right to man but the end thereof is destruction” – that truth is not applied exclusively to those in the world; that goes for us too. Another thing to consider is, when Israel left Egypt the first time, they did so “with a high hand” (Ex. 14:8) which is to say, according to rabbinical writings anyway, with dancing, celebration and pageantry. In other words, they gathered their belongings, loaded up their wagons and their animals and walked – danced and paraded – out of Egypt – they apparently didn’t run from Pharaoh in the middle of the night. If the first Exodus establishes the pattern, then what does this say for the future Exodus?

That question brings me back to this point: the woman goes into the wilderness to the place that God has prepared for her and, according to the text, she flies there “on the wings of a great eagle” (Rev. 12:14). Of course, it was upon “eagles’ wings” that God brought Israel to Him in the wilderness at Sinai (Ex. 19:4) – do you see the connection between the two? Eagles’ wings take His people into the wilderness then and in the future. If eagles’ wings factor so prominently into the first Exodus and, apparently, the last-day flight into the wilderness, what should I make of this Scripture?

“But they who wait (longing patiently) for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” – Isaiah 40:31

Here is what I am driving at: in response to those who brought up the issue of what Scripture has to say about His people going into the wilderness, there is no doubt that Scripture does

foretell of such. However, I think it is important to read all that the Scripture has to say on the subject. When this wilderness event happens, the entire world will know that “I am the LORD” because He will be the One to lead His people out of the nations and into the wilderness. As far as I’m concerned, there is a big difference between someone fleeing somewhere because they think it is time and the Creator leading His people into the wilderness because it is time. It is imperative that we learn to “wait” patiently on Him and, as we wait, to be faithful to fulfill His purpose in our lives.

Once Again: Servant or Survivor?

Alright, let’s set the wilderness issue aside for a moment and simply address the wisdom of preparation in advance of hard times and, maybe, the prudence of escaping to a safe, isolated place that is “off the grid.” First of all, I do not think that taking measures to provide for and protect your family in the face of uncertain times is wrong or shows lack of faith. To the contrary, to ignore these things and do nothing is foolhardy. It could be likened to the foolish virgins who refused to attain an ample supply of oil until it was too late to join the wedding party. I have taken measures to provide for my family in the event of a catastrophe or economic upheaval because that is my responsibility as a husband and a father. As I pointed out in the previous article, that is what the ant does – he stores up in the summer because he knows that winter is coming. However, as I also pointed out in the previous article, he does this so that he can continue being an ant. My preparation is so that I can, hopefully, continue doing what I’m supposed to be doing – being salt and light – but my confidence for the future is in the One who can do what I am unable to do or plan for.

In other words, please do not confuse wise preparation with fearful self-preservation. That was and is my point. It is not a lack of faith in God that prompts me to store up provisions so that I may continue to function in my purpose, yet, it may be a lack of faith in Him to think that my plans and provisions are what will see me through the crisis. This latter position is the mindset I take issue with. The question was raised, “But can’t I be both a servant and a survivor?” My answer would be, “Yes,” it is possible to be both but I adamantly believe it will depend on your motive. Are you seeking to save your life? Or are you, for His sake and purposes, willing to lay your life down? The answer to that question is the key to answering whether we can be both servants and survivors. Y’shua said, “For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Mt 16:25).

There you have it: sometimes a servant can be a survivor but, on the other hand, sometimes servants simply overcome, which we are also called to do. What I mean is, did Paul or Stephen survive or did they overcome? In the last days, Scripture make it clear that Messiah calls us to overcome but does He call us to survive? He says, “Those who endure to the end will be saved” but does that mean they survive in the way that many are seeking to? It is not for me to say what God intends for each and everyone one of us other than to say, Scripture is clear we are to be servants and follow the path He has set before us. Consider the

conversation between Peter and the LORD when Y'shua asked him, three times, if he loved Him.

“He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Y'shua said to him, ‘Feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.’ This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God. And after saying this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’ Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Y'shua loved following them ... and when Peter saw him, he said to Y'shua, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ Y'shua said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’ ” (John 21:17-22)

The point here is, one survived (the one we presume to be John) but the other (Peter) did not. Yet, that was not the most important issue. What mattered most was that they were both servants willing to follow Him. Thus, we learn that some who serve will survive; the three Hebrews of Daniel 3 are a great example of this. Their survival, however, was not dependant on their plans and provisions but on their willingness to serve the Creator to the death if necessary. In the last days, it appears that there will be those who survive and for the same reasons – because they are servants.

“I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie – behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet and they will learn that I have loved you. Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.” – Revelation 3:8-10

To the congregation of brotherly love, Y'shua says that, even though they are weary, they have persevered; they have been faithful to His Word and have not denied His authority. Because of this, He promised to “keep” – literally “guard” – them from the time of trial coming upon the whole world. It would seem then that these people survive what is coming but it is because, and I stress this, they have been faithful servants. They, apparently, did not seek to save their own lives. Might it be that these are the same type of people spoken of elsewhere in the Revelation?

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death.” – Revelation 12:11

Again, the Bible seems to indicate that there will, indeed, be survivors but, also, it seems to make clear it is because they didn't seek to save their life but were quite willing to lose it. I suggest that it is because their focus is not on what the Adversary is doing or will do but upon the Messiah and His purposes. When we are focused on Him and follow Him, then we are truly His servants – “take up your cross and follow me.” As such, we are able to overcome and, as we see with Peter, overcoming – not necessarily surviving – is what we are called to. Can I be a servant and a survivor? Yes, sometimes it works out that way but sometimes servants don't survive – they simply overcome. The greatest example we have is Messiah's willingness to sacrifice everything that the will of the Father might be done – “not my will but yours be done.” I realize that what I write here is not the final word on the issue because I am not the final authority on the issue – I'm just sharing what's on my heart and exploring what the Scripture has to say on the subject. I realize that what the Father is speaking to me concerning the path to my future may not line up exactly with what He is speaking to you about the path to your future. Still, I think we must all agree that being a Servant and an Overcomer is what we are all called to. So, whether that path takes you to an isolated and safe place or not, the point is that we walk the path set before us faithfully, patiently and humbly. As we do that, we should be cognizant of the fact that the Messiah requires of us that we be salt and light. Let us, therefore, strive to be servants rather than survivors and if we should survive, all the better. If that is not the case – if we are called but to overcome – what will matter is that we followed Him! What will account for more is to hear Him say, “Well done good and faithful servant.”

Blessings and shalom.